

everyday. I have joined my distinguished colleagues and co-chairs of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, Mr. Lantos and Mr. Wolf, and many of my other colleagues, in a letter to Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, Secretary of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, calling on him to review their cases and release them immediately and unconditionally. It is my hope that our efforts will generate a victory in the battle for the three teachers; and ultimately, have a positive impact on the war against human rights abuses.

Here in the United States, we take for granted the inalienable rights afforded to us by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The freedoms of speech, expression, and assembly are all rights exercised by American citizens everyday. We often forgot these rights, which our forefathers fought so vigorously to ensure, are not freedoms enjoyed by all citizens of our world. I praise Trinity College for recognizing the significance of this international epidemic and urge my colleagues to join in the international campaign to combat these horrific violations of human rights.

SU CLINICA FAMILIA

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Su Clinica Familia (Spanish for "your family clinic"), a comprehensive primary health care service center in the Rio Grande Valley, on their 30th anniversary of operation in South Texas, and I ask my colleagues to join me in the observation of this important milestone.

Su Clinica's work over the years has provided the only medical care available to so many migrant workers and low-income families in the Valley over the past three decades. On the anniversary of their 30th year in service to South Texas, we are breaking ground on April 6th to celebrate the new dimension of their work: academia.

Su Clinica is now a major principal partner with the Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC), and they will be the primary training ground for RAHC. This will be a new direction for them in which they will recruit, train, and retain doctors and health care professionals, all in the Rio Grande Valley.

Su Clinica burst onto the South Texas community health scene in 1971 to improve the health for families in Cameron and Willacy Counties in South Texas. Su Clinica was the dream of a group of generous patrons, the Archdiocese of Brownsville and other charity groups, all who wanted to see health care available to migrant and seasonal farm workers.

I have particular, personal appreciation for Su Clinica Familia. As a former migrant worker, I have a unique perspective of what it is like to be unable to afford health care. I have vivid memories from my childhood about the health of my family. We had no health insurance, and thankfully we were relatively healthy.

But when one of us was sick, my father would gather us up, no matter what the time of day, to pray for whoever was sick. That was our health insurance. I still advocate that peo-

ple pray for their loved ones when they are sick, but no one should be without basic health care today.

Su Clinica's unique health care services increase the self-worth of the people treated there. That self-worth is evident in the faces of the people who walk out of the clinic. The resulting longevity of their lives makes for happier families and healthier South Texans.

I have long had a working relationship with this leader in health care in the Rio Grande Valley. There is an enormous population in South Texas that have no access to health care, and Su Clinica has gone a long way toward decreasing that overall number.

From seeking the causes of anencephaly along the border in the early 1990s, to working together today to stem the epidemic of rampant, drug resistant tuberculosis along the border, our relationship has been strong and productive. The new direction in becoming the primary training ground for young doctors and health professionals is a natural outgrowth of Su Clinica's three decades of work for our community.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Su Clinica Familia for their longevity and success in bringing health care to low-income South Texans, at a time and in a place where the quality of health care has international repercussions.

A BILL TO PERMANENTLY EXTEND THE WORK OPPORTUNITY AND WELFARE-TO-WORK TAX CREDITS AND IMPROVE THE PROGRAMS

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, Today I am joined by my colleague from New York, Mr. RANGEL, in introducing our bill, "The Work Opportunity Improvement Act of 2001." The bill would permanently extend the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the Welfare-to-Work Credit (W-t-W) and make one other change discussed below. Both programs are currently due to expire on December 31, 2001.

As we reintroduce the bill to permanently extend the programs, I want to note how please I was to receive a report dated March 13, 2001 from the General Accounting Office which concluded that there is little evidence, if any, that employers are "churning" employees to take advantage of multiple credits. This report puts aside the churning charge that has surfaced in the past, and reflects favorably on the integrity of the programs.

Because there have been a number of improvements in the programs over the past few years, they are being well received in providing employment, with training, for our disadvantaged. During the past five years, WOTC and W-t-W have been an integral part in helping over a million and a half low-skilled individuals dependent on public assistance, enter into the work force. That does not mean there can't be further improvements to the programs. We will continue to review the programs for improvements that will benefit all the parties involved.

Such training can be costly and the credits provide an incentive to employers to hire the

disadvantaged and provide the needed training while offsetting costs associated with the latter effort. Of course, many believe the programs would be even more successful if they could be extended indefinitely. We hear from both employers and state job services, which administer the programs, that the continued uncertainty surrounding short-term extensions impedes expanded participation and improvements in program administration. If the programs were made permanent, employers, both large and small, would be induced to expand their recruitment efforts and encourage the states to improve the administration of the programs. Such a change would benefit everyone.

The other provision in the bill would expand the food stamp category by increasing the age limit from 24 to 50 years of age. The current ceiling of 24 limits the availability of individuals in this targeted category. There are many individuals, over the age of 24, who could be gainfully employed if the age limit was expanded. Currently, the programs do an excellent job of helping women on welfare enter into the workforce. Over 80% of the hires in the programs are women. However, men from welfare households face a greater barrier to hire because they are no longer eligible for welfare once they turn 18. However, they can qualify if they are a member of a household receiving food stamps. But again, the age limit on the food stamp category is 24. We believe increasing that age limit to 50 will provide employers an incentive to hire such individuals and provide them with a sense of personal responsibility and self-esteem in assuming their responsibility as parents and members of society.

We use our colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this important legislation to extend and improve the two programs.

IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH—RECOGNIZING NEW MEXICO WOMEN

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I asked New Mexicans to send me nominations of women in New Mexico who have given special service to our community, but may have never received recognition for their good deeds.

I received twenty-eight worthy nominations describing sacrifices and contributions these women have made for our community. The people who nominated the women described the dedication they have witnessed: volunteer hours for veteran services, Sunday School Teachers, service on non-profit boards, homeless programs, fund raising for scholarships for at risk youth, healthcare providers going above the call of duty, child advocates, volunteers at churches and synagogues, successful business women, wives, mothers and friends.

Allow me to share examples of the nominations.

Lydia Ashanin—A community volunteer since the age of 10. She has actively mentored many young women through Big Brothers/Big Sisters and other youth programs. Lydia is a committed volunteer for